



SOUTHERN AFRICAN SHOW POULTRY ORGANISATION BREED STANDARDS

DANISH



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:	Denmark
CATEGORY:	Soft feather
EGG COLOUR:	White (Sitters)
CLASSIFICATION:	Light breed

MASSES:

LARGE

Cock	2.2 kg
Hen	1.8 kg
Cockerel	1.8 kg
Pullet	1.6 kg

BANTAM

Cock	800 g
Hen	700 g
Cockerel	750 g
Pullet	650 g

During the Iron Age half-burnt chicken bones have been found in Denmark and the size of it clearly shows that it comes from domestic fowl. This was the first sign of domestic fowl in Denmark. From that time onwards many foreign breed chickens arrived in Denmark but from the 1800s there is countless evidence of the existence of a special Danish chicken type. The Danish are more than 2000 years old.

But where do they come from? The story begins 5000 to 8000 years ago in northern India and Southeast Asian region, where at least 4 species of wild jungle fowl have lived for countless millennia and continue to live as wild birds. It has been proven that all domestic fowl descended from at least three of these wild fowl species, although the details of the

origin is obscure and will hardly ever be fully clarified. Today it is believed that the red jungle fowl played a very important role as the progenitor of the Danish Country Chicken. The Danish has been brought to Denmark by the immigration of Germanic tribes from the east, arriving probably around 400 years BC who migrated into the Northern Europe area which includes Northern Germany, Denmark and the rest of the Scandinavian area. Until the early 1800's the Danish were known basically as "Country Chickens" in Denmark. In 1879 the "Association for Poultry Promotion" called members to refrain from outcrossing breeds, and they laid down the detailed characteristics of the breed. The first standard was published in 1901.

Danish chickens have a slightly condensed not too slender body, with plump mature rear of the hen. It is hardy and resistant to diseases. They diligently seek food and has a relatively low feed consumption, are excellent layers and the chicks are fairly hardy and fast growing. The Danish chicken is endangered at present.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

THE MALE

Carriage:	Very sprightly and alert, but without any suggestion of stiltedness or in-kneed appearance. Well balanced. Slightly condensed, but not too slender body with an abundant well-developed hind part.
Body:	Well-rounded of medium length.
Head:	Medium in size.
Face:	Smooth, free of feathers or wrinkles
Eyes:	Robust and lively, red-brown.
Beak:	Medium length, thick and slightly curved. Slate to slate-brown.
Comb:	Single upright, rather small. Four to six shapely serrations, tending towards fly-away type. The blade extending well beyond the back of the head and to follow without touching the line of the head.
Ear-lobes:	Small almond-shaped, smooth and fine. White in colour.
Wattles:	Medium size, with fine tissue, broad and rounded.
Neck:	Medium long, towering with abundant feathering that falls well beyond the shoulders.
Back:	Broad, gently sloping towards the tail.
Saddle:	Saddle short and broad with abundant hackle running smoothly into tail coverts.
Tail:	Moderately full tail, good width carried at an angle of approximately 60 degrees from the line of the back. Sickie feathers strong, broad and beautifully curved.

Wings:	Strongly developed, wearied pulled up, but not horizontal and snugly to the body.
Chest:	Broad and well-rounded.
Legs:	Solid and well developed with fine scales. Slate to slate-blue.
Toes:	Four, well spread. Slate to slate-blue.

THE FEMALE

The general characteristics are similar to those of the male, allowing for the natural sexual differences.

COLOURS

THE BROWN

MALE

Plumage	
Head:	Dark red.
Neck:	Golden brown with a lustrous greenish black stripe running nearly parallel with edges and extending through the middle of each feather, tapering to a point near its lower extremity. Front of neck a lustrous greenish black.
Back and Saddle:	Golden brown with a lustrous greenish black stripe running through the middle of each feather, same as in the hackle.
Tail:	The main tail black.
Wings:	The fronts: black, bows: reddish brown, coverts: lustrous greenish black, forming well defined wing-bars when wings are folded. Primaries: black, lower webs edged with brown. Secondaries: black edges of lower webs a rich brown of sufficient width to form wing bay of same colour. Well-developed rather broad rounded feathers.
Breast:	Lustrous black.
Body and fluff:	Black
Under-colour of all sections:	Slate.

FEMALE

Plumage	
Head:	Reddish bay.
Neck:	Golden brown bay with a black stripe running nearly parallel with edges and extending through the middle of each feather, tapering to a point near its lower extremity. Front of neck the same as the breast.

Back:	Web of feathers on surface, black moderately fine stippling with reddish brown, the brown to predominate, free from shafting, purple and regular pencilling. The exposed part of feather to carry a lustrous green sheen with the unexposed portion of feather dull slaty black.
Tail:	The main tail greenish black with the two top feathers stippled with rich reddish brown. Coverts same as back.
Wings:	Fronts, bows and coverts the same colour as described for the back. Primaries, slate black with the outer web slightly edged with brown. Secondary's slate black with the outer web stippled with reddish brown.
Breast:	Same colour as described for back except that the breast carries a slightly lighter shade, due to the greater predominance of the reddish brown stippling, free from shafting.
Body and fluff:	The body is slate black tinged with brown and free from shafting. The fluff slate black tinged with brown.
Under-colour of all sections:	Dull slate black.

OTHER COLOURS: Both black and white varieties exist

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Long straight beak and coarse head. Beefy or lobbed comb in males. Comb free from thumb marks and side sprigs. Narrow across the shoulders and saddle. Lacking width between thighs. Exceptionally long legs. Wry or drooping tail. Badly drooping wings in female. Lack of abdominal development, lack of condition as evidenced in paleness of face, looseness in feather, over-fat etc. Eye colour other than specified. Cow hocks. White in face. Red ear-lobes. Yellow legs.

BANTAMS

Danish bantams are exhibited in all the colours of their larger counterparts and should follow the large fowl standard in all respects.

SCALE OF POINTS	
Type	25
Comb	10
Ear-lobes and wattles	10
Eyes	5
Legs and feet	10
Breast	5
Size	5
Colour	20
Condition	10
TOTAL	100